

## **Northeast Regional Video Teleconference: Implementing, Adapting, and Sustaining Model Programs**

### **Strengthening Families Program Barriers/Solutions**

#### **1. Recruiting Families**

It can be difficult to recruit families to come to a 14-week long family program in the evenings, particularly if they have no prior relationship with the agency or group leaders. Barriers to attendance are addressed in SFP if it is done with fidelity. All SFP program implementations include:

- Meals
- Child Care
- Transportation (if needed)
- Incentives for Attendance and Homework Completion

#### **2. Gaining Trust**

With increasing concerns about child protective services outplacement and more immigrant families needing support, some parents are reluctant to volunteer for a program due to lack of trust.

- Involve Own Clients
- Engage Clients Prior To Enrollment in Positive Activities or Services (attend prior graduations with friends)

The primary strategy to use is to begin with clients in your own programs. Our research suggests that the more contact clients have with an agency, the more likely they are to sign up for SFP. For instance, clients in residential treatment are twice as likely to sign up as clients in outpatient drug treatment. Parents of elementary school children are more likely to enroll than trying to attract parents through general advertisements in newspapers.

#### **3. Cost**

For any model program, cost is always an issue for community agencies. SFP program developers have made every effort to keep the cost low, which has made SFP one of the most widely replicated model programs. Over 960 group leaders from 455 agencies were trained in the last year alone from many different types of community agencies (e.g., community coalitions, schools, faith communities, courts, drug treatment facilities, mental health centers, homeless shelters, family services agencies, etc.).

#### **Strategies to Keep Cost Low Include:**

- **Material Costs Minimal:** One time cost of \$250 for limited agency site license to reproduce as many three Group Leader Training Manuals, Parent Handbooks, Children's Handbooks, Implementation Guides, and Evaluation Instruments as needed for their own agency's use from a CD-ROM sent from the University of Utah.

- **Training Costs Low:** \$500 per day per Lutra Group trainer plus travel cost to come to agency to train 10-40 people. We encourage agencies to invite other local agencies to attend to defray workshop costs and train back-up group leaders to replace any staff turnover later. A two-day SFP workshop is \$2,800 plus travel for two trainers.

#### **4. Number of Staff Needed**

Implementing SFP with fidelity requires agencies to hire contract hourly staff or assign four regular staff to SFP. Two parent group leaders and two children's group leaders, plus a supervisor or site coordinator are needed to run SFP. In addition, a child-care professional is generally hired on contract, with support of the older teens in the families or grand parents.

Solutions for reducing staff costs include:

- Assign regular staff as part of agency job
- Select prior graduated parents to be co-leaders in training
- Use student interns trained from local universities
- Involve volunteers or elders
- Hire teens from participating families to help with the child-care or the children's groups.

### **Fidelity and Successful Adaptations of SFP**

**1. Cultural and Local Adaptations for Special Populations.** SFP has been locally adapted and evaluated for all major ethnic groups of families on CSAP grants, such as:

- Rural African Americans (Kumpfer, Hoke, et al., 1991)
- Urban African Americans (Aktan, Kumpfer, & Turner, 1996)
- Asian and Pacific Islanders (Kameoke, 1996)
- Hispanics (Kumpfer, Wamberg, & Martinez, et al., 1996)
- American Indians: Shoshonne-Bannock (Evans, et al., 2001)
- American Indian: Ojibway (Hall & Smith, 2000)
- Canadian Families (Kumpfer, Rankin, & Lavigne, 2000)
- Australian Families (Kumpfer & Compton, 1998)
- Junior High School Families (Molgaard & Kumpfer, 1997)
- Elementary School Families (Kumpfer, et.a., 2002)
- Families of Severely Mentally Ill Children (Harrison, Proschauer, & Kumpfer, 1995)

#### **2. Core Components Needed for Fidelity**

- Training By SFP Certified Trainers through Lutra Group
- Co-leaders for Parent and Child Groups
- Meals, Transportation, Child Care, and Incentives
- 14-sessions long, can be done twice per week to reduce length to 7 weeks
- Each lesson topic is covered in correct order
- Each lesson includes experiential exercises

- Family practice session stresses skills practice of homework as well as fun family activities

### **3. Processes for Capturing SFP Adaptations**

- End of Session Leader and Site Coordinator Rating Forms
- End of Group Satisfaction Forms
- On-line Weekly Chat on sharing Session by Session Tips for implementation
- Bulletin Board sharing of SFP session adaptations that worked
- Site Visits and Fidelity Checklists by external evaluators

## **Sustaining and Funding SFP Long-term**

### **1. Conditions Supporting Long-term Implementation**

- Agency Director and Staff commitment to SFP
- Quality staff
- Ability to attract and retain families
- Ability to attract long-term funding Base (e.g. County Block Grant funding, foundation or United Way funding)
- Positive evaluation results used to attract funding

### **2. Factors Inhibiting Sustainability**

- Mismatch of SFP with needs of the families
- Increased difficulty in recruiting families
- Loss of incentive funds, quality meals, etc.
- Difficulty maintaining quality staff to run program
- Staff turnover problems
- Loss of key person committed to SFP

### **3. Step to Promoting Long-term Sustainability**

- High quality process and outcome evaluation
- Hire quality staff, Lutra group trains 4 group leaders plus additional back-up trainers, and provide close supervision
- Participate in on-line technical assistance course with Dr. Kumpfer at the University of Utah weekly
- Use positive evaluation results to attract long-term funding from your county or state, private funders, or United Way
- Continue implementing SFP with quality and fidelity